

Reading Through Pictures: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

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ÖZET Resimler anlatının görsel unsurları olarak fantastik kurgunun en sık karşılaşılan özelliklerinden biri olmuştur. Bu türün sunduğu sınırları olmayan hayali alanlar çeşitli biçim ve şekillerle, karmaşık veya basit olarak görsel öğelere dönüştürülmektedir. Bu tarz çizim ve resimlerin varlığı fantastik kurgunun çocuk edebiyatı içinde yer aldığı tezini güçlendirse de anlatı ve resimler arasındaki bariz ve karmaşık ilişki incelenmeyi hak eder. Resim kullanımı bir gelenek haline geldikçe metinlerarası ilişkiye benzer bir resimlerarası ilişki kurulabilir. Metinler arasındaki resimsel izler fantastik kurguda anlatının doğası hakkında yeni anlayışların ortaya çıkmasına yardımcı olabilir. İngiliz edebiyatının en önemli fantastik romanlarından biri olan ve C. S. Lewis tarafından yazılan *Aslan, Cadı ve Dolap* bu girişim için güzel bir örnek oluşturabilir. Bu çalışmada, *Aslan, Cadı ve Dolap* ile Carroll'un *Alice Harikalar Diyarında*, Le Guin'in *Yerdeniz Büyücüsü* adlı eserleri ve Tolkien'in *Yüzüklerin Efendisi* üçlemesi arasında resimlerarası ilişki kurulup bu ilişkinin anlam ve anlatı üzerine katkıları tartışılacaktır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELER *Aslan, Cadı ve Dolap, Yüzüklerin Efendisi, Yerdeniz Büyücüsü, Alice Harikalar Diyarında*, fantastik kurgu, resim, çizim

ABSTRACT Pictures as the visual elements of the narrative have become one of the commonest features in fantastic fiction. Boundless imaginative landscapes offered by this genre are transferred into visual elements in varied forms and shape, complex or simple. Though the mere existence of such illustrations or pictures strengthen the idea that the fantastic is children's literature, the obvious and intricate relationship between the pictures and the narration provides an interesting point that deserves analysis. As the use of illustrations has become traditionalized, inter-pictorial relations can be established similar to intertextuality. Pictorial traces among the texts may help to reveal fresh insights concerning the nature of the narration in the fantastic. C. S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe* as one of the most important fantastic novels of English literature serves as a well example to such enterprise. In this study, the inter-pictorial relations in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe*, with regard to Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Le Guin's *The Wizard of Earthsea* will be established and their contribution to the meaning and the narration will be discussed.

KEYWORDS *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe, The Lord of the Rings, The Wizard of Earthsea, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, fantastic fiction, picture, illustration

This paper will deal with the narrative techniques of C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe* regarding the illustrations placed within the text. These illustrations will be compared to the illustrations that are placed in other major fantastic texts. In order to provide a complete insight into the nature of illustrations and their functions, a group of picture taken from the novel will be compared to those taken from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in and *A Wizard of Earthsea*.

Before the analysis, the nature of illustrations should be mentioned and certain questions should be addressed concerning the function, the necessity or reliability of illustrations. As an additional question mark, it should also be examined whether they can be considered as paratextual elements in terms of Gerard Genette's theory defining paratext as the material surrounding the text like the introduction part, dedication or preface. These paratextual elements inevitably influence the process of reading and interpretation. According to Genette "paratext has an influence on the public, an influence that –whether well or poorly understood and achieved – is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it."¹ Illustrations are influential in the process of interpretation; however, Genette explains that "by definition, something is not a paratext unless the author accepts responsibility for it."² This complicates the issue if posthumous publications and further editions are considered. However, Genette's desire to embellish paratextual elements with authorial function can be opposed using Foucault's argument in his article "What is an Author?". Insisting on constraining paratextual elements within authorial intention has the danger of blocking multiple interpretations because "the author is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work; the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses."³ Freeing the text off the authorial function eventually frees the text and opens new ways for multiple interpretations.

In traditional sense, illustrations have played an important role in the fantastic fiction. For Schakel, "illustrations become a part of a text, vital to the meaning and feeling the words convey."⁴ As is known, the expected audience or the implied reader of fairy tales is the children. Before their parents read these tales aloud to them, they overview the pictures. Schakel claims that:

"The imaginative experiencing of such a text is deeply affected by the illustrations, especially when children first encounter the books by hearing a parent or teacher read them aloud. These children "read" the illustrations before they read the words. The illustrations not only establish specific visual images, but also shape the way the entire story will be imaged."⁵

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1. Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, [translated by Jane Lewin] (New York: Cambridge, 1997), p.2.
 2. Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, p.9.
 3. Michel Foucault, "What is An Author?", in P. Rabinow (ed.), *Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), pp.118-119.
 4. P. J. Schakel, *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis : Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds* (University of Missouri Press, 2002), p.31.
 5. P. J. Schakel, *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis*, p.31.

Through these illustrations, they imagine the possible construction of the story and with their strong imaginative power and with the aid of these illustrations, they consume the tale. What is interesting is that while children are known to have unlimited imagination, these illustrations also force them to limit their imagination. Once they see Peter or Edmund or Alice in their illustrated form, these forms invade their imagined tales, and they imagine Alice or Edmund as they are drawn in the illustrations. Therefore, their imaginative experience is shaped by these pictures beforehand.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe is full of illustrations; there are maps and pictures to depict the scenes. The novel starts with a map which locates the land of Narnia. Like other maps of the majority of the fantastic fiction the land is coastal, an easy way to determine spatial limitation. As in the maps of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and other fantastic fictions, the boundaries are not drawn randomly but determined by geographical properties like mountains or rivers. The fact that the map is given at the very beginning is very important because it helps reader to situate this unknown land into a certain place. Furthermore, the presence of the map increases the credibility of that created universe.

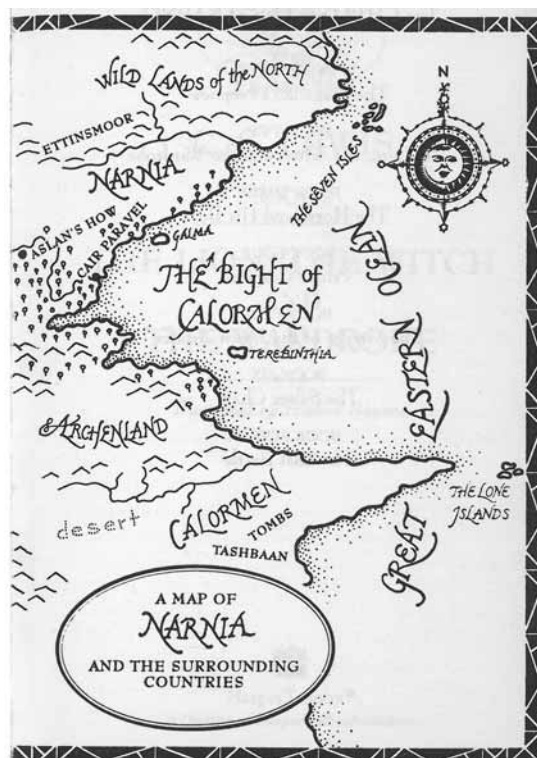


FIGURE 1—The map of Narnia⁶

6. The map is reproduced at the opening page of 1994 HarperCollins edition.

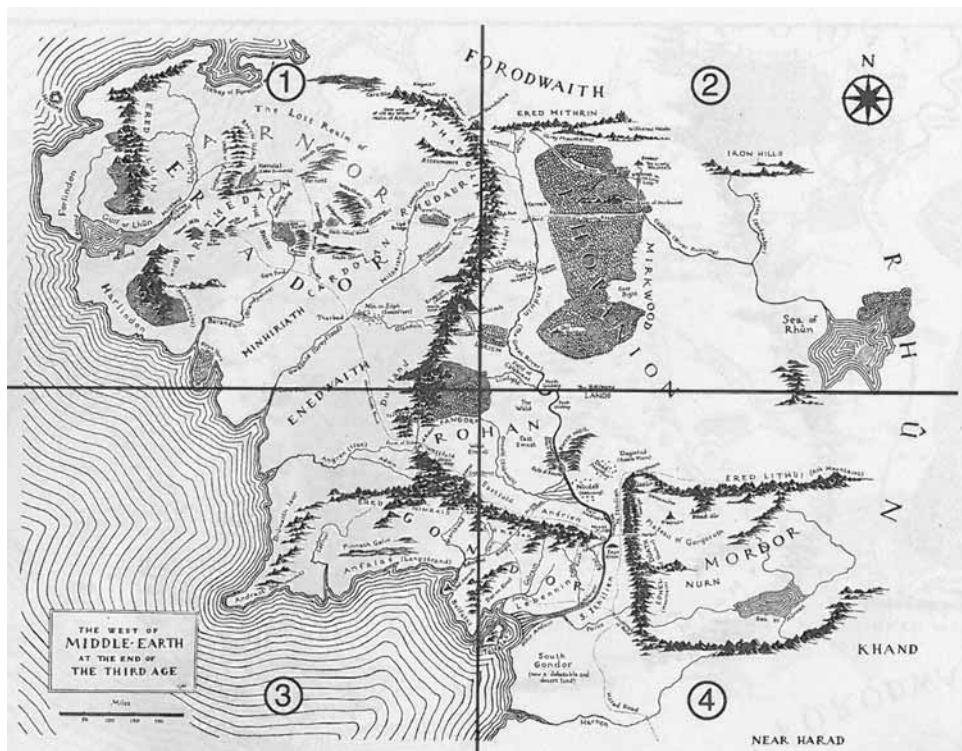


FIGURE 2—The map of the West of Middle-Earth.⁷

While locating the imagined or alternative universes into concrete maps increases the credibility in spatial dimension, through these maps, the reader follows the quest or the voyage that the heroes or heroines of the fantasy undertake. For instance, the reader of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy knows Frodo and Sam should pass through the Misty mountains to travel to Mordor. While reading, the reader can check the narrated land within the map and the reading experience is heightened with the aid of visual experience. Likewise, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Peavensie siblings travel through the forest to reach Cair Paravel, and the reader observes the forest within the map.

Maps are not the single visual elements in the fantasy. There are also many illustrations which sometimes give the portrayal of the character or a brief summary of the event that will be narrated in the chapter. Generally speaking, the illustrations function in the same way. They are there to relate the events, though in a different manner. In this manner, the

7. The map is reproduced in 1994 Harper Collins edition. The following illustrations taken from *The Fellowship of the Ring* is produced by Alan Lee. However, the map above is created by Pauline Baynes who was also the creator of the map and the illustrations in the Narnia series.

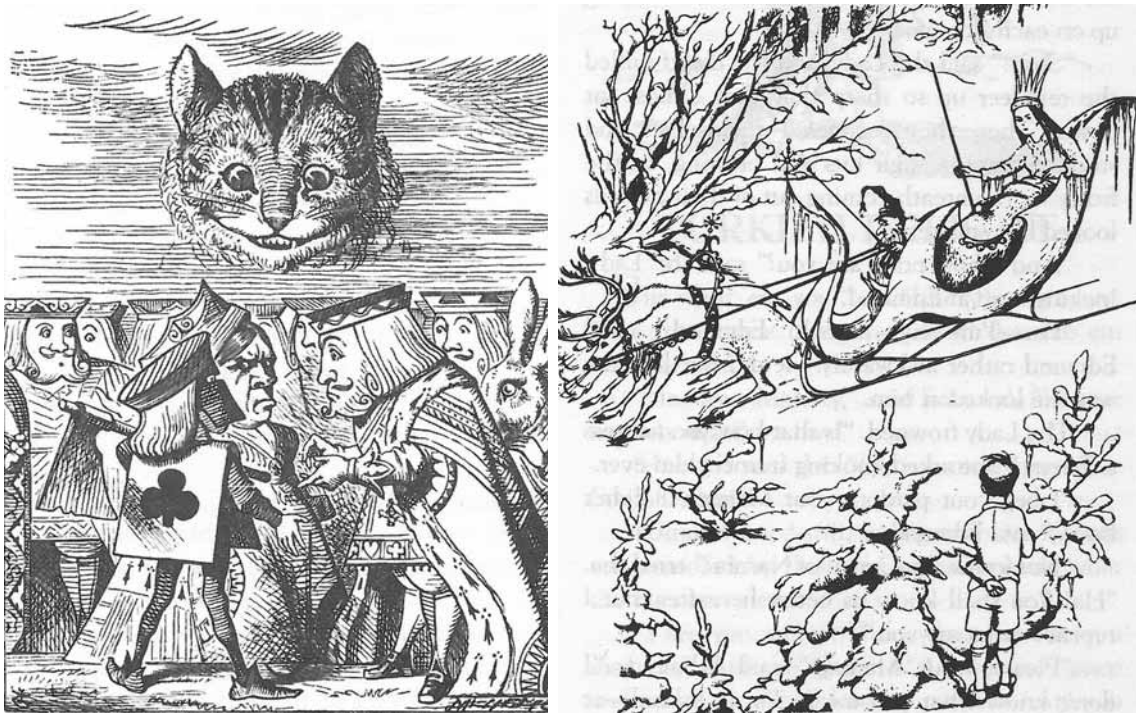


FIGURE 3—*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*⁸

illustrations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe* are similar; they are plain and simple reflecting the dispute going on between the executioner, the King, and the Queen concerning the beheading of the Cheshire cat and in the second one, Edmund facing the White witch whose evil face is apparent.

The differences among the illustrations can easily be associated with the different styles of the artists. However, this would be a quick decision. It is known that authors have the right to choose who is going to prepare the illustrations of their novels.⁹ Therefore, the choice of illustrations is not a straightforward one but a deeply thought and therefore they deserve serious analysis. A picture taken from the novel may prove the point. The picture describes the beavers' house in detail following a written depiction of the house:

8. The first image is produced in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (New York: Oxford Uni. Press, 2009, p.77); The second image is taken from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), p.33.

9. P. J. Schakel, *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis*, p.31.



FIGURE 4—*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.¹⁰

“Lucy thought the Beavers had a very snug little home though it was not at all like Mr. Tumnus’s cave. There were no books or pictures, and instead of beds there were *bunks*, like on board ship, built into the wall. And there were *hams* and *strings of onions* hanging from the roof, and against the walls were *gum boots* and *oilskins* and *hatchets* and pairs of *shears* and *spades* and *trowels* and things for carrying mortar in and *fishing-rods* and *fishing-nets* and *sacks*. And the cloth on the table, though very clean, was very rough. . . . Susan drained the *potatoes* and then put them all back in the empty pot to dry on the side of the range while Lucy was helping Mrs. Beaver to dish up the *trout*, so that in a very few minutes everyone was drawing up their *stools* (it was all *three-legged stools* in the Beavers’ house except for Mrs. Beaver’s own special *rocking chair* beside the fire) and preparing to enjoy themselves. There was a *jug of creamy milk* for the children (Mr. Beaver stuck to *beer*) and a great big lump of deep *yellow butter* in the middle of the table from which everyone took as much as he wanted to go with his potatoes, and all the children thought—and I agree with them—that there’s nothing to beat good freshwater fish if you eat it when it has been alive half an hour ago and has come out of the pan half a minute ago.”¹¹

Each object, described in the passage is carefully is transmitted into the illustration. Bunks, onions, shears, rocking chair, even the stools are three legged. The illustration is

10. C. S. Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, p.81.

11. C. S. Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, p.81. (emphasis added).



FIGURE 5—*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*¹²

highly thought and well prepared, and it does not miss the slightest detail. For each illustration, the similar observation can be carried out in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Consider the second illustration in which Tumnus' house is portrayed:

“As soon as they were inside she found herself blinking in the light of a *wood fire*. Then Mr. Tumnus stooped and took a flaming piece of wood out of the fire with a neat little pair of tongs, and lit a *lamp*. “Now we shan't be long,” he said, and immediately put a *kettle* on. Lucy thought she had never been in a nicer place. It was a little, dry, clean cave of reddish stone with a *carpet* on the floor and *two little chairs* (“one for me and one for a friend,” said Mr. Tumnus) and a *table* and a *dresser* and a *mantelpiece* over the fire and above that a *picture of an old Faun* with a gray beard. In one corner there was a *door* which Lucy thought must lead to Mr. Tumnus's bedroom, and on one wall was a *shelf full of books*. ... There was a nice brown egg, lightly boiled, for each of them, and then sardines on toast, and then buttered toast, and then toast with honey, and then a *sugar-topped cake*.”¹³

A carefully depicted setting comes to life in the illustration. The viewer of the illustration (probably those children who cannot read) has the visual experience, and they share what the reader visualizes in his own imagination. For Schakel, these detailed descriptions help the child get into the story:

“The abundant detail describing the Beavers' home and the supper the children help prepare, for example, has no role in furthering their adventure. It is there to help convey what ordinary existence

12. C. S. Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, p.16.

13. C. S. Lewis *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, pp.15-16. (emphasis added).

in Narnia is like— what it would be like to live there. That is one of the great appeals of the stories— the sort of thing that could induce a child to smash through the back of his parents' wardrobe and hack away at the wall behind it, in an effort to get into Narnia himself.”¹⁴

From this point, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe* is closer to *Alice in Wonderland*. Illustrations in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in are also carefully drawn and fully suit to the narrated event. Illustrations are also important in *Alice*. In the following illustration the reader is introduced to a Gryphon. Bu what is a Gryphon?

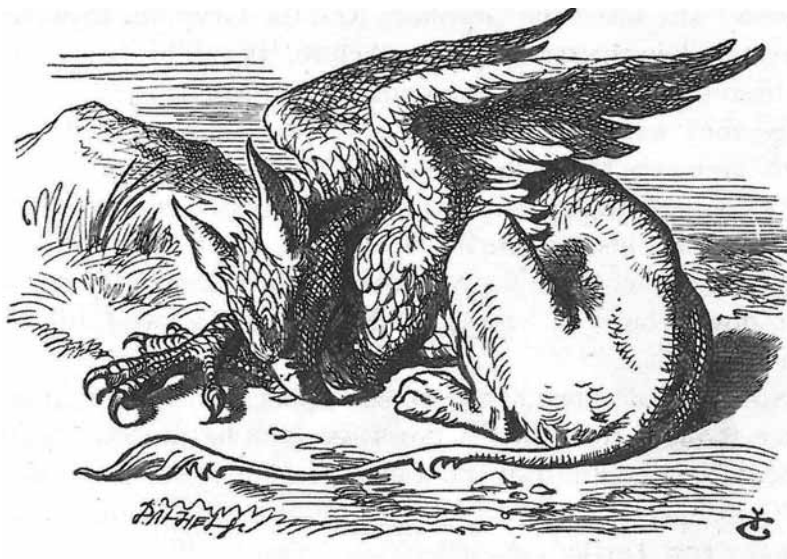


FIGURE 6—*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*¹⁵

“They very soon came upon a Gryphon, lying fast asleep in the sun. (If you don't know what a Gryphon is, look at the picture.) ‘Up, lazy thing!’ said the Queen, and take this young lady to see the Mock Turtle, and to hear his history. I must go back and see after some executions I have ordered.”¹⁶

The narrator does not take pains to describe what a Gryphon is; he is so sure that the illustration will do the necessary job. In the third illustration, the narrator describes the emotional situation and physical difficulty of Alice and her failure in cricket:

14. P. J. Schakel, *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis*, p.59

15. Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, p.83.

16. Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, p.83.



FIGURE 7—*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*¹⁷

“The chief difficulty Alice found at first was in managing her flamingo: she succeeded in getting its body tucked away, comfortably enough, under her arm, with its legs hanging down, but generally, just as she had got its neck nicely straightened out, and was going to give the hedgehog a blow with its head, it would twist itself round and look up in her face, with such a puzzled expression that she could not help bursting out laughing: and when she had got its head down, and was going to begin again, it was very provoking to find that the hedgehog had unrolled itself, and was in the act of crawling away.”¹⁸

Emotions and real physical difficulties are given both in the passage and in the illustration. Alice faces the flamingo when she tries to shoot yet she cannot control the hedgehog either.

The illustrations also manifest the atmosphere of the events narrated. The simplicity of the illustrations of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* is in parallel with the relatively lighter atmosphere of the text. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is defined by its medieval atmosphere with all its battles, swords and armours. Therefore, the following illustration taken from *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the first book of the trilogy, clearly depicts the gloomy atmosphere of the quest undertaken by the fellowship of the ring:

17. Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, p.74.

18. Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, p.74.



FIGURE 8—*The Fellowship of the Ring* ¹⁹

“Following his lead the Company passed under the northern arch. They found themselves in a wide corridor. As they went along it the glimmer grew stronger, and they saw that it came through a doorway on their right. It was high and flat-topped, and the stone door was still upon its hinges, standing half open. Beyond it was a large square chamber. It was dimly lit, but to their eyes, after so long a time in the dark, it seemed dazzlingly bright, and they blinked as they entered.”²⁰

The illustration which very well reflects the given description evokes the sense of medievalism by which the trilogy can be best described. In fact, the elements present in the trilogy (swords, battles etc) imply that these events are the events of the medieval times. Therefore, the illustrations should serve to stress this fact. However, they should also highlight the fantastic side of the novel as the next illustration performs which presents fantastic stone Trolls:

19. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (London: Harper Collins, 2008).

20. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, pp.415-416.



FIGURE 9—*The Fellowship of the Ring*²¹

Hobbits are also placed among them to stress the hugeness of the trolls and smallness of hobbits. It is obvious that the illustrations are complex when compared to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe*. Similarly, in the following illustrations taken from *A Wizard of Earthsea*, the similar complexity is visible.

21. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*.



FIGURE 10—*A Wizard of Earthsea*²²

Though they are black and white, like those in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wadrobe*, illustrations do not give as much detail as in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It should also be noted that while the pictures in *A Wizard of Earthsea* is defined as “drawings”, in the rest they are presented as illustrations. Therefore, the drawings in *A Wizard of Earthsea* are not detailed as in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. However, their complexity lies in the fact that they tell little comparatively. Then, it can be concluded that the implied reader of a text shapes the illustrations of the given text. While the implied reader of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is obviously children, *The Lord of the Rings* and *A Wizard of Earthsea* are addressed to more grown-ups. While the illustrations in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* clearly depicts the event and provides somehow a probable synopsis, those in *The Lord of the Rings* and *A Wizard of Earthsea* do not give such satisfaction. They become more abstract when compared to those in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in* and *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

The illustrations, on the other hand, help the narrator (storyteller) as they provide a visual experience for the tiniest detail that is narrated by the voice of the narrator (storyteller). Moreover, as these illustrations tell much about the narrated event within simple lines, they help the implied audience (child listeners) visualize the event. Then,

22. pp.1, 54, 169.

while the tone of the narrator has an impact on the genre of the text, the illustrations with regard to their complexity or the simplicity help to locate the text within certain genre. Consequently, authoritative, knowing and controlling voice of the narrator and the simplicity and detailed nature of the illustrations make *the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* a fairy tale.

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